

April 1971

Many thanks to 92 people who are now receiving this newsletter and supporting it. Partly due to the increase in mail rates sometime in May, as of the June issue the subscription rates will be \$2.00 a year. Whether you pay the \$2.00 then or later will depend on how long you have received the newsletter so far and how much you have given so far. But more about that next month. It was suggested I send this 3rd class. Knowing that 3rd class mail could take up to 2 weeks or more to travel across the country, I prefer to spend a little more for stamps so you get this within 3 days of mailing.

TAPE RECORDERS: Mel Shlank hopes to write an article about tape recorders in the future. It would be primarily a description of features of various makes. He would welcome information from any of you before he writes it (M S, 553 Howellton Rd, Orange, Conn 06477). Don Fisher reminds us that Sony makes good variable speed recorders which will correct the speed of most off-speed programs. Bruce Ruggles tells us that Sony has recently put out new longer-wearing record/playback heads that give double the life of the heads that come with the machine. Bruce has the beginning of a very good article on the do's and don'ts of trading and dubbing which will appear later on.) rec

DATES: In an effort to get as many correct dates as possible I am making up a master list by crosschecking the many catalogs I have. I have made a good beginning into this and have dated many of my programs that were without them. I would appreciate xeroxed copies of radio logs from years 1930-1962. The only way you can verify a date is to know the day the program was on (and many changed through the years). If you want dates for certain programs or the day they were on for certain years let me know. If I can get some help I will eventually publish as complete a list as I can of each network program, what years they were broadcast, and the day of the week it was on..but I need help. If I can get to the library and check the microfilms of old New York Times that would help.

CORRECT DATES AND TITLES: JOAN DAVIS with Danny Thomas: 10/4/47. MAN CALLED X: "A-bomb" and "Monte Carlo Story" the same. MARCH OF TIME 4/31/43-Troop supplies-~~is~~ wrong. April has 30 days. Who has the right date? Be careful in listing Arch Oboler programs. There were at least 3 that I know of. LIGHTS OUT was the first. Very few of these programs are circulated. A few of the ones that are were part of a special revival of these programs. ARCH OBOLER'S PLAYS was another. This occurred later and used many of the programs on LIGHTS OUT. The last series was THE DEVIL AND MR. O. This was a fairly recent syndicated series which also used the same stories but with different titles and cast. Arch oboler introduced these programs. Many people list as the series title LIGHTS OUT regardless of the correct program. Please be careful about this. Some people, like myself, are only really interested in the original LIGHTS OUT. ESCAPE "Open Boat" is about 3 men in a lifeboat washing toward shore. "Conquerer's Isle" (mine has no title mentioned) is about a bomber that crashes on an island run by Dr. Grove. DIMENSION X "Magnificent Hoax" and "Dr. Grimshaw's Sanitorium" the same. The second title is the correct one. EXPLORING TOMORROW "Alien" and "Desert Object" the same. (Hope you can read my program titles a little better. I am capitalizing the series and putting in quotes the program title, thanks to the suggestion by Carl Erickson)) Title

OFF-SPEED PROGRAMS: I was asked why some programs are off speed. I can think of 2 basic reasons. When the program is initially transferred from disc to tape either the turntable is fast or the recorder is slow. This would account for a fast program-the opposite being true for a slow one. From tape to tape-a fast program will result if the

"master" recorder is fast and/or the dubbing machine is slow. The opposite is true for a slow program. Once the slow dub is used as a master on a machine at correct speed the program will then be dubbed fast.

DEATHS: P.T Farnsworth, TV pioneer died Mar 12, 1971. Mrs. Atwater Kent, widow of the pioneer of radios, died Mar 13, 1971.

PERIODICALS AND BOOKS: Received the March issue of Riverside Quarterly, excellent reading for the science fiction enthusiast. If you are interested in information about the 29th World Sc. Fiction Convention write Noreascon, Box 547, Cambridge, Mass 02139. Dave Swift recommends the new series of books published by Time-Life, "The Fabulous Century." Volume 4, 1930-40, has a nice section about radio with pictures and scripts. Received Stay Tuned, Mar 1971. Another 20 pages of interesting reading for the radio buff (S T, 1250 La Barre Circle, Webster, NY 14580.) Address of Riverside Quarterly is Box 40, Univ. Station, Regina, Canada. Roger Hill mentions the possibility of a more sophisticated magazine for radio buffs and state and local chapters of the RHSA. Haven't heard from Charlie Ingersoll at this point about his thoughts. Charlie did do a poll at one time and found that most of the traders preferred the informal newsletters that he, I and others put out. What are your thoughts on fancier newsletters and state chapters.

CONVENTIONS: Next convention of various nostalgics is Southwestern on 1971, July 8-11 at Statler-Hilton, Dallas Tex. It will cover Old films, serials, sc. fiction, comics, old records, radio magazines, etc. Contact Mr. J B Williams, Box 242, Lewisville, Tex. 75037 for details.

Our small northeastern radio gettogether is still in the planning stage. If we have it, it will be a 1 or 2 day affair at a motor inn or hotel in the New Haven area in July or August. 10 people responded favorably to the idea mentioned by Sal Trapani in last month's newsletter. However, for someone to travel many miles we want to ensure their satisfaction. What would you expect at a meeting such as this. There could be guest speakers, you would hobnob with fellow collectors. What other appropriate activities can you suggest to make this affair successful. If we had it ^{one day} would Saturday or Sunday be better? Please send any encouragement and suggestions to me as soon as possible.

BROADCASTING MAGAZINE: 3/22/71; W Cronkite to anchor return on YOU ARE THERE. Like its earlier radio and TV presentations, it will depict historical events. It was on CBS radio 1948-50 and CBS TV 1953-57.

SUSPENSE: More dates and info. I will soon have a supplement to my SUSPENSE list together with a dated ESCAPE. "Actors Blood" also 9/21/43??; "Donavans Brain" also 2/7/48 with J MacIntyre; "Nightmare" also 9/1/49 with G Peck; "Sorry Wrong Number" also 2/24/44; "Death of Old Flame" also 10/29/61; "Four of a Kind" 1/25/59; "Give me Liberty" 10/21/48; "A Little Piece of Rope" with L Ball 10/14/48; "Death of Mrs. Allen" 10/20/52; "Frankie and Johnny" 5/5/57; "Amateur" 5/3/59; "Ria-bouschenska" 11/13/47; "Hangman wont Wait" 2/9/43; "Marry for Murder" 9/9/43; "A Friend of Daddys" 5/17/59; Music was also composed by Alexander Semmler

HERE AND THERE: New Friends: Alan Dobney, 5940 Nelson St. #307, Vancouver, BC, Canada. Alan has about 1000 programs. Don Fisher, 343 Main St, Bennington, VT 05201. Don was in broadcasting for about 15 years in the late 50's and 60's. He started as a producer-director with CBS and helped direct OUR GAL SUNDAY, and THIS IS NORA DRAKE. Don then went to NBC where he got to know Jimmy Wallington quite well. Jimmy is now an announcer and news man with the Voice of America in Washington. Then Don went to ABC and in 1966 opened his own station in Middlebury, VT. He sold out in 1970 and now owns the Radio Shack store in Bennington. Don would like to know of all people putting out newsletter or magazines about early radio and/or trading. (The ones I know)
Hed

of are RADIO DIAL, STAY TUNED, EPILOG, ECHOES OF THE PAST, HERO HOBBY, REMINISCING TIME, HELLO AGAIN. Details on all of these have been in various newsletters. Let me know of any others. Don also has a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour prepared presentation that he gives to civic groups in the area about old time radio. It has been very successful and if you send him a 1200 ft reel he will dub it for you and send the script with it.

....Robert Monaco, Box 24, Upper Jay, NY 12987. Bob is 25 and also collects 8mm and 16mm sound films... Jack Thompson R.R. Hwy 2 East, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Jack works at a radio station and has quite a few discs... Dan Visco, 32 Cresthill Rd, Brighton, Mass 02125. Herb Wells, 2108 Forest St, Des Moines, Iowa 50311....Am dubbing 10 hours of programs for Dave Davies, manager of Radio Shack in New Haven, Conn. Perhaps he will join the trading circuit.

Old Friends: Bill Blalock mentions that early reels of tape came in 1250 ft and 5" reel 650 feet....Roy Bright gives us Carlton E Morse's phone number (415) 851-7454....Tom Cole's new address: 613 North 8th St, Allentown, Penn 18102. Tom has had to stop trading temporarily until he gets a new recorder....Fred Dickey and John Furman (they live within 5 blocks of each other) have talked with John Gunn, producer-director from the 30's to the 50's. John was a close friend of Ed Begley and Karl Swenson. Among other things he was once fired by Phillips H Lord....Carl Erickson would like to know what stations in the Long Island listening area are broadcasting old radio programs (Box 449, Shoreham, NY 11786). Carl would also like to know about a program called THATCHER COLT written by Anthony Abbott and broadcast about 1936 on Sunday afternoons on NBC Red....Got a call from John Furman from Schenectady. John just acquired a huge batch of newspapers which someone bought from a local library from 1928-1955. I hope to visit him soon to cut out the logs. This will certainly help my project of days and dates....Ernie Hack is selling rubber stamps for radio buffs with radio nostalgia on them. Bill Blalock did the art work. They are \$3.75 each (6 Perkins St, Bristol, Conn 06010)....Received the syllabus for the Broadcast Communications course taught by Roger Hill. From the looks of it, his students should be experts on radio from the 20's to the 60's.Charles Hoefler has several relatively uncirculated ESCAPES. Opening is missing but quality is good. "3 Skeleton Quay," 3/17/50 with V Price; "Danger at Matecumbe" 3/24/50, F Lovejoy; "Green Splotches" 3/31/50; "The Footprint" 8/18/50, W Conrad....Got a call from Eric Klaree from Atlanta. Eric is very interested in a convention and may try to have one in the Atlanta area....(C Hoefler's address: 21 Charlemont Ct, No Ghelmsford, Mass 01863)....Evan MacBride is looking for SUPERMAN. (3521 Arden Creek Rd, Sacramento, Cal 95825)....Bill Nitsch is looking for IT PAYS TO BE IGNORANT (255 Heberle Rd, Rochester, NY 14609)....Jim O'Neal is looking for "A Girl, A Girl" by Eddie Fisher (86 Franklin St, New Haven, Conn 06511)....Rolly Roos has all of the Super Bowl games and many of the New Years Day College bowl games for the last 3-4 years.Bruce Ruggles, as of April 15th, will be converting his entire library to half track. He is writing a 5-hour radio production for his station entitled "The History of the Academy Awards." Every number in the best song category will feature the original sound track.

UNCLE DON-DID HE OR DIDN'T HE

According to Ted Husing in his book Ten Years before the Mike (1935) even though the New Yorker printed the story, without names, as true, it never happened. But something like it did happen in Philadelphia in 1921. In those days there were at least 2 mikes in every studio-one for the announcer and one for the artist. At the announcer's table was a 3-way switch; Down it cut off the concert mike and threw in the announcer's, up the concert mike was live and the announcer's was dead,

and a middle position which killed both mikes. At the Philadelphia station was Uncle Whip, one of radio's pioneer bedtime raconteurs, and he was an embittered man-telling little Johnnie to eat his spinach and little Betty not to bite her nails. One evening he reached the breaking point. He was at the announcer's table that day. At last he reached the blessed line: "Now, good night, children. Don't forget to eat your Malted Mush, and be sure to tune in on Uncle Whip again tomorrow." With that he slammed the switch to turn off his mike so hard that it passed neutral and brought in the concert mike. Muttering to himself as he passed the concert mike he informed the world in general, "I'm a bastard if this isn't one hell of a job for a he-man." He said this with his back to the mike and the broadcast was dim but it went out just the same. Considering that there were just a small number of receiving sets then not too many listeners heard him. Yet it registered and has persisted in various versions to this day as radio's classic bad-break story.

Jim O'Neal

AIRCHECKS

by

Carl T. Erickson

--MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY, patterned on the vigorous and robust prosecuting success of the New York District Attorney Thomas E. Dewey, was first broadcast as a summer replacement for the BOB HOPE SHOW in June of 1939. The networks would not guarantee that the same time slots would be available to sponsors when programs returned to the air in the autumn so the sponsor had to purchase 52 weeks of air time, replacing the popular shows with a 13-week replacement series in the summer.

--During 1939, some fifty radio serials were produced with credit to Frank and Anne Hummert. They started out in Chicago in 1924, working for an advertising agency. Realizing that the continuing story was a potential goldmine, they purchased some 9 million dollars worth of air time and then sold it to sponsors. Between them they created such soap operas as STELLA DALLAS, LORENZO JONES, JUST PLAIN BILL, BACKSTAGE WIFE, OUR GAL SUNDAY, etc. The Hummerts would devise the plot line and turn it over to a stable of dialog writers (at \$25 min. per show), rather than to creators (at up to \$2,000 per week, e.g., Gertrude Berg). The Hummerts would then supervise the final script. They sold a package consisting of story, actors, and producers. Some of their scripts were also used on Radio Normandie, after undergoing changes for the British audience (e.g., LORENZO JONES became MARMADUKE BROWN).

--On Dec 24th, 1939 S Temple made her radio debut. She had turned down several offers including one for \$35,000 to appear with Bergan and McCarthy and instead performed for free for the GULF SCREEN GUILD THEATER Xmas show. On that show she sang a duet with Nelson Eddy of Silent Night.

--SCREEN GUILD THEATER has access to some 95% of Hollywood's talent who donate their time to the show. In return the Gulf Oil Corp. pays \$10,000 a program into the Screen Actor's Guild retirement fund. Since their sponsorship began, Gulf has contributed \$370,000.

--The best-known cowboy artist of movies and records began his radio series on Jan 7, 1940. Gene Autry, who turned down an offer of \$3,000 to endorse cigarettes, started at \$1,000 a week for Wrigley's on CBS replacing GATEWAY TO HOLLYWOOD. Since 1936 Autry was Hollywood's top western star. In 1939 he was making well over \$100,000 a year.

--Crossley ratings for 1939 were 1. Bergan; 2. J Benny; 3. Lux Radio Theater; 4. Fibber McGee and Molly; 5. Kraft Music Hall; 6. Major Bowes; 7. Bob Hope; 8. Fitch Bandwagon; 9. Kate Smith; 10. Pot O'Gold (does anyone have #10). Fred Allen dropped to 11th.

*See Folder
Ruggles*